


The Flying Teuton

BY ALICE BROWN

E were talking, that night, about the year after the great war, which was also the year of the great religious awakening. A few of us had dropped into the Neo-Pacifist Club, that assemblage of old-time pacifists who, having been actually immersed in the great war, afterward set humbly about informing themselves on the subject of those passions that make the duty of defensive fighting at times a holy one, and who, having once seen Michael hurl Satan down to the abyss, actually began to suspect you'd got to do more than read Satan the beatitudes if he climbed up again. There never was anything like the eagerness of these after-the-war pacifists to study human nature in other than its sentimental aspects, to learn to predict the great waves of savagery that wreck civilization at intervals—unless there are dykes—and to plumb the heroism of those men who gave their bodies that the soul of nations might securely live. We retraced a good many steps on wide territory that night, took up and looked at things familiar we were all the better for remembering, as a man says his creed, from time to time, no matter how well he knows it; and chiefly we read over, in its different aspects, the pages of the great revival. This was not, it will be remembered, an increase in the authority of any church, but simply the recognition in all hearts of all peoples that God is, and that the plagues of the world spawn out of our forgetfulness that He is, and our overwhelming desire toward the things of this temporal life. Whence, in our haste, we sacrifice to the devil.

The terms of peace had been as righteous as it is possible for hurt hearts to compass. Evil had been bound and foresight had made the path of justice plain. The nations that had borne the first

attack (and with what light limbs they sprang to meet it!), they who had learned to read God in that awful unfurling of the book of life, were wonderfully ready to enter on their task of building up the house of peace. The United States, which had saved its skin so long that it had almost mislaid its soul, was sitting at the knees of knowledge and plainly asking to be taught. One amazing detail of the great revival was that there would be no industrial boycott. The men about the peace table came away from it imbued with a desire to save the peoples who had been guilty of the virtue of obedience in following false rulers, and they represented to their governments the barbarity of curbing even the commerce of those nations which had set the world ablaze. So it followed that territory and indemnities were the penalties imposed. Boundaries had changed—and so had governments!—but every country was to go back to its former freedom of selling goods in all quarters of the earth. In their arguments the peace delegates had used the supreme one that, "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord." They had fixed the terms of all the vengeance they were sure they were entitled to, fixed it soberly and sternly, too. But they did not quite see, having effectually crippled the powers of evil, that they ought also to cripple the powers of good—the desire of nations to sell their products and the work of their hands abroad. So they said, "Vengeance is mine," but they did not go so far as to note that, judging from the centuries, God Himself would indubitably be on the spot. He would repay.

It was in the spring of that year that a German liner, tied up since 1914, and waiting the will of the English fleet, was released and put into commission again and loaded with goods for the United States. On board her was Frank Drake, a newspaper correspondent who had,

after hovering about the Peace Congress, been wandering over Germany, in a desultory fashion, to see what changes had been wrought in her by the war. And it was Drake who sat with us at the Neo-Pacifist Club that night, and was persuaded to tell a story he had, in the year after the great war, got into print, and so done incalculable service to the muse of history and incidentally made his own name to be remembered. For what he had seen hundreds of others confirmed—only he saw it first, and gave his testimony in a manner so direct as well as picturesque that it might as well have been he alone who sang that epic story.

He was a tough, seasoned-looking man, spare, and hard as whipcord, and with an adventurer's face—aquiline, uplifted, looking for horizons, some one said. At this point of his life he was gray-headed—yet he never would be old. We had gathered about him as near as might be, and really filled the room 'way back into the shadows. He had been talking about the supernatural events that had been inextricably mingled with facts of battle and march and countermarch, and owned himself frankly bemused by them.

"It isn't as if I hadn't actually been in the war, you know. I've seen things. So I haven't the slightest doubt the French saw Angels at Mons. I haven't the slightest doubt a fellow blown out of a trench into the next world meets so many of the other fellows that were blown there before him that it gives him that look—I've seen it over and over—of surprise, wonder. Oh, and beauty, too, a most awful kind of beauty. Whatever they saw when they went from the trenches to—wherever it is—they were mighty well pleased to be there, and satisfied that the other fellows could get along without them. And, mind you, things lasted, too, after they got over there. I'm as sure of that as I am that I'm sitting here. The love of it all—the *Vive la France!* you know, the grotesque fondness for Old Blighty that made them die for her—those weren't wiped out by getting into another atmosphere. It's all pretty much the same, you know, there and here, only there you apparently see the causes of things and the values. And you abso-

lutely can't hate. You see what a damned shame it was that anybody should ever have been ignorant enough to hate."

"You'd say it was a world of peace?" inquired a rapt-looking saint of a man in the front row.

"Don't talk to me about peace—yet," said Drake. "I'm not over there and I haven't got that perspective. As for Peace, too many crimes were committed in her name those last years of the war—too much cowardice, expediency, the devil and all of people wanting to save their skins and their money. Yes, I know, peace is what they've earned for us, those fellows in Europe, and it's a gorgeous peace. But the word itself does take me back. It sets me swearing.

"Yes, I'll tell you about the ship, the *Treue Königin* and the first sailing from Bremen, if that's what you want. They'd put a good deal of spectacular business into the sailing of that ship because she was the first one after John Bull tied up their navy. There were flags flying and crowds and *Hochs!* and altogether it was an occasion to be remembered. I knew it would be, and that's why I was there. I rather wanted to say I was on the first free ship that sailed out of Bremen, and I hadn't much Teutonophobia any more since Kultur had got its medicine. Besides, wasn't the whole world chanting 'Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord'? and I'd begun to be awakened a little, too, in my inward parts, though I didn't talk much about it. The voyage began delightfully. I was the only American on board. The rest were merchants going over to take up relations with us again, and a brand-new consul or two.

"Near evening on the second day something queer happened. It was foggy, and I was on deck, talking, in a desultory way, with the first mate, but really wondering if I'd got to sleep to the obligato of the fog-horn all night, when suddenly out of the dark came the nose of a great ship. Our engines were reversed, but not in time, and she struck us amidships. I cowered down. Yes, I did. There was no time for life-preservers and lowering boats. I simply cowered, and put my hand over my eyes.

But there was no crash, no shock, no grinding of splintered wood and steel. I opened my eyes. The first mate was still there, a foot or two further from me, as if the apparition had started him toward his duty in case of collision. But he was looking off into the fog, and now he turned and looked at me. I have seen men frightened, but never one in such case as this.

"Did you see it?" he asked. It was as if he implored me to say I did, because otherwise he'd have to doubt his own reason.

"Did she sheer off?" I asked. My voice sounded queer to me.

"Sheer off? She struck us amidships and went through us."

"I began to stare round me. I must have looked a fool. It was as if I were trying to find a break in a piece of china. There was the deck unoccupied, except for us two, exactly as it had been when we were struck. There were the smokestacks and boats and altogether the familiar outline of the ship.

"Well!" said I. My voice was a sort of croak now. "You and I are nutty, that's all. There never was any ship."

"But he turned and ran up to the lookout, and afterward I heard the wireless zip-zipping away, and later—for I stayed on deck; I couldn't go below—I saw him and the captain standing amidships and talking. They looked pretty serious and really a little sick, just as I felt. And I didn't speak to either of them. Didn't dare. You know when there's a fire in the hold, or any such pleasantry on board ship, you'd better let the great high josses alone. Well, that's what I did. The next day I found the first mate wouldn't notice me. He spoke English perfectly, but all I could get out of him was a *Nein* or a *Was?* and as stupid a grin as I ever saw on a man's face. So I understood the incident was closed. And it began to look a little thin even to me, who'd seen it. But the next night, with no fog at all, the thing happened again. A big British liner came down on us, and we did all in the power of navigation to escape her; but she raked us and passed through us from stern to stern, and I swear I put out a hand and touched her as she cut the length of the deck. For an instant I

believed what I know every officer and man on the ship believed at the time—believed madly, for you couldn't reason in the face of that monstrous happening. They believed England had broken the peace, only they cursed 'perfidious Albion,' and I knew she'd got wind of some devil's deed we hadn't heard of, and was at her old beneficence of police work on the sea. But it was only an instant we could think that, for there, untouched, unharmed, at her maximum speed went the English liner. And we, too, were untouched. We weren't making our course because we'd manœvered so as to avoid her, and now we lay there an instant, trembling, before we swung about again. Yes, it's a fact; the ship did tremble, and though there was her plain mechanical reason for it, it seemed to be out of panic, just as everybody aboard of her was trembling. And that night the ship's doctor, a fat, red-haired man whom I'd remembered as waltzing indefatigably and exquisitely on a trip to the West Indies, but who had been turned into a jelly of melancholy by the war, did talk to me. I think he had to. He thought he was dotty and the entire lot were dotty. He had to find out whether a plain American was onto it.

"A pleasant night, last night," he said.

"I knew what he was coming at, and I thought there was no need of wasting our time by preambles. 'Yes,' said I, 'till the British liner ran us down.'"

"He looked at me—well, I can't tell you how grateful he looked. All melted up, you know, the way those fatties are sometimes. I stepped away a little. I thought he was going to kiss me.

"You saw it, too. God be thanked!" said he.

"Saw it?" said I. "I not only saw her, but I touched her on the elbow as she split the deck. Splendid old lady, wasn't she? But eccentric. Makes nothing of cutting a ship in two, just for fun, I suppose, and not losing speed. Her little joke. That's how I take it, don't you?"

"But I shouldn't have chaffed him. It shut him up. I think he gathered I was in it somehow. But the fact is, I was scared. Well, if you'll believe me (and of course you will, for I've written the thing out in my Notes on the War,

and it's been quoted over and over till even school children know the text of it), so, as you must believe me and the hundreds that corroborated me, in other cases, the next collision, or ramming—what shall I call it?—happened in broad daylight, ten o'clock in the morning. It was a perfectly clear day and a smooth sea. We were in the track of the freighter *Marlborough*, and by George! she didn't make way for us. She ran through us as neat as wax and cut us in two. But we didn't stay cut. We didn't show a crack. And there she went churning off, as gay as you please, and we steamed on our way. Only we weren't gay, mind you. We were scared. And the doctor, ghastly again, came stumping across the deck to me, and I thought he was going to fall into my arms.

"*Lieber Gott!*" said he. 'What does it mean? We see them, but they don't see us.'

"That was it. We'd been slow in taking the hint, but we'd got it at last. We were invisible on the seas. We were practically non-existent. And we'd tried wireless. We'd sent out call after call, and finally, desperately, S. O. S., because we knew, if there was a conspiracy against us, no ship but would listen to that. No answer. We were marooned—if you can be marooned on the high seas. Civilization had put us on an island of silence and invisibility. Civilization wasn't going to play with us any more. Though it wasn't civilization at all. It wasn't any punitive device of man. It was something outside.

"For the next two days the doctor hardly left me. I suppose he was forbidden to talk and he had to keep near somebody or die. He wasn't the man he was when he tripped the light fantastic in the West Indies. He'd been through the war, and now he was going through something worse. And he said to me the morning of the day before we were due in New York:

"Now we shall be picking up the pilot. And I sha'n't go back. I've got a married daughter in New York. I shall spend the rest of my life with her.'

"And, as we went on, we sighted ship after ship. It was a great day for ships. You don't know how many there are till they won't notice you. And not

one of them would turn out for us or answer our call. And everybody was desperate now on board, though we had learned we were safe enough, even if they did run us down. So we put on all speed and forged ahead and rammed whatever got in our way—and never sunk them. Never seemed to touch them. But with every one we hit and never hurt our panic grew. Desperate panic it was, from the captain down to me. Then we came on the pilot-boats, quite a distance out, for of course everybody knew we were coming and there was a little rivalry about it all. Just as I'd wanted to say I'd crossed on the first liner from Germany, every pilot wanted to be the one to take us in. Well, the first one was making for us and we hailed him. But, by God! he didn't slacken speed, but dashed through us. That little bobbing boat ran through our High Mightiness and went careering on in search of us. And we went on in search of another pilot. And we sighted him shortly, several of him; and, though they didn't ram us in that ghostly way they had, they went sliding by us, bowing and ducking to the breeze, and always—that was the awful part of it—looking for us. There we were, and they didn't see us. And we hailed them and they didn't hear. By that time we were all pretty nearly off our nuts, and it took us different ways. The captain was purple with rage and that sense of injured importance the *Deutscher* didn't lose by having to toe the mark after his big war bubble burst. He swore, and I heard him, that he could take his own ship into New York Harbor as well as any condemned pilot that ever sailed, and he wouldn't even hail another, not even if all the dead in the sea rose up and faced him. I was rather worried over that about the dead in the sea. I couldn't help thinking that if all the dead recently in the sea rose up and combined against any German ship, it would have short shrift. But we were all, I fancy, rather glad of his stand. We had full confidence in him. He was a clever, daring fellow, heavier by the iron cross—for in the last years he'd sent scores of men unwarned to the bottom, and he had been precious to Kultur. We much preferred to go in unpiloted to making even

one more grisly try at proving we were living flesh and blood.

"My own particular obsession was to wonder what would happen if, when a ship clove our decks and left them solid, as they'd done so often in the past six days, I put myself in the way of its nose. Would it run through me like a wedge and I close up unhurt? Would it smash me, carry me with it off the deck, to Kingdom Come? I wondered. It didn't smash life-boats or deck-chairs. It—I found I was beginning to call the ramming boats 'it,' as if there were but one of them, though really there were all kinds of craft—it would go through a rug on the deck and leave it in its folds. But I hadn't the sand to put myself in its way and find out beyond a peradventure whether it tore me, nerve from nerve. The drama was too absorbing. I wanted to see it through. I did once, in my most daring minute, stand at the rail, watching a freighter as it came, head on. And I yelled to the lookout, when we were near enough to pass the time of day, yelled desperately. I can see him now, a small man with a lined face and blue eyes screwed up into a point of light, as if the whole of him concentrated on feeding that one sense, just seeing. And there was a queer-shaped scar on his face, a kind of cornerwise scar, and I wondered how he got it. The freighter was making her maximum, and so were we; but in that fraction of time I waited for her it seemed to be hours, eternities, that I had my eyes on the little man with the scar. It seemed as if he and I alone had the destinies of the world to settle. If I called and he answered me, it would prove our ship was not lost in a loneliness of invisibility more terrible than any obvious danger on the unfriending seas. Suppose you were in hell, and you met face to face somebody that had your pardon or your reprieve mysteriously about him, and the pardon and reprieve of all the other millions there—think how you'd fix him with your eyes and signal, call to him for fear he'd pass you by. Well, that was how I signaled and called the little man with the scar. But he stared through me out of those clear lenses of his eyes, and when I yelled the loudest he made up his lips and began whistling a tune. It

was a whispering sort of whistle, but I heard it, we were so near. And the tune—well, the tune broke my heart, for it was an old English tune that made me think of the beautiful English country as I had seen it not many weeks before, with the people soberly beginning to till it with unhindered hands. And here were we on a German ship that the world wouldn't even see. The sun himself wouldn't lend his rays for humanity to look at us. And then, as I began to cry—yes, I cried; I'm not ashamed to own it—the freighter passed through us, and I felt the unsteadiness of her wake. The lookout and I had met in hell, and I had hailed and he had not answered me.

"Was I glad to see the Goddess of Liberty and the gay old harbor of New York? I believe you! We went on like a house afire, and once, when I caught a glimpse of the captain's face, I decided he could steer his ship into any harbor against unknown reefs and currents, because there was a fury of revolt in him, a colossal force of will. And as I thought that I exulted with him, for, though nobody knows better than I do the way the Furies ought to be out after Kultur—oh yes, they'd have to or lose their job—there was a kind of fighting grit that came up in me, and for that voyage I was conscious that the *Treu Königin* had got to fight, fight, for existence, the mere decency of being visible to other men. Did we sail into New York Harbor, invisible or not? You know as well as I. The story's as real as George Washington and Valley Forge, and it'll stay in print, like them, as long as print exists. We stopped short, an instant only, it was, and then against the impetus of the ship and the steering-gear and against the will of her captain and her crew, she turned about and steamed away again. And, by the Lord! it was as graceful a sweep as I ever saw a liner make. I remember thinking afterward that if there were heavenly steersmen on board—the Furies, maybe, taking the wheel by turn—they knew little tricks of the trade we pygmies didn't. At first, of course, this right-about didn't worry us. It didn't worry me, at least. I thought the captain had found it a more difficult matter than he thought, and was going down harbor

again, for some mysterious nautical reason, to turn about and make another try. But pretty soon I saw my fat doctor making for me. He was ash-colored by now, and he kept licking his dry lips.

"We're going back," he said.

"Ah!" said I. "They don't find it so easy?"

"Why, good God, man!" said he, "look at the sun. Don't you see your course? We're going back, I tell you!"

"Back where?" I asked. But I didn't care. So long as we made New York Harbor within twenty-four hours or more I wasn't going to complain.

"Where?" said he. He looked at me now as if he'd got to teach me what he knew, and I thought I'd never seen eyes so full of fear, absolute fear. Nothing in mortal peril calls that look into a man's eyes. It has to be the unknown, the unaccounted for. 'How do I know where? I only know the ship's out of our hands somehow. She won't answer.'

"Well," said I, 'something's the matter with the machinery.' You see, the bright American air, the gay harbor, the Statue of Liberty—everything had heartened me. For an instant I didn't believe we really were invisible.

"The machinery's working like a very devil, but it's working its own way. You can't turn a nut on this ship unless it wants to be turned. You can't change your course unless this devil of a ship wants it changed."

"I laughed out. 'You've been under too much of a strain,' said I. 'You seem to think the ship's bewitched. Well, if we're not to dock in New York, after this little excursion down the harbor, where is it your impression we're going? Back to Germany?'

"God knows!" said he, solemnly. "Maybe back to Germany. I wish to God we were there now. Or maybe we shall sail the seas—eternally."

"I laughed again. But he put up his hand and I stopped, his panic was actually so terrible. I was sorry for the beggar.

"Wait!" said he. "I thought that would happen. I wonder it hasn't happened before."

"A man came running—the quarter-

master, I found out afterward—and I had one glimpse of his face as he passed. He covered the deck as if he were sprinting and was near the goal, and suddenly the run seemed only to give him momentum or get his courage up, and he slipped over the rail, with a flying confusion of arms and legs, into the sea. I yelled and grabbed a life-belt and ran to the rail, where I knew there'd be sailors, in an instant, letting down a boat. I threw my life-belt, and kept on yelling. But no one came, no one but the doctor. In an instant I realized he was by my side, his hands in his pockets, his eyes fixed in a dull gaze on the sea. And we hadn't slackened speed, and we hadn't put about, and I saw two other sailors idly at the rail, looking as the doctor looked, into the vacancy of immediate space.

"For God's sake!" said I, 'aren't they going to do something?'

"There's nothing to do," said my doctor. "He won't come up. They know that."

"Won't come up? Why won't he?"

"Because he doesn't want to."

"Didn't you ever hear of the instinct of self-preservation," I spluttered, 'that steps in and defeats a man, even when he thinks he's done with life? How do you know but that poor devil is back there choking and praying and swallowing salt water, and sane again—sane enough to see he was dotty when he swapped the deck for the sea?'

"He won't come up," said the doctor. He turned away and, with his head bent, began to plod along the deck. I couldn't help thinking of the way he used to fly over the planks in the West Indies. But he did turn back again for one word more. 'Did you,' said he—and he looked a little—what shall I say? a little ironic, as if he'd got something now to floor me with—'did you ever happen to hear of the *Flying Dutchman*?'

"Then I understood. They'd understood days and days ago. The words had been whispered round the decks, in the galley even, *Der Fliegende Holländer*. Knowing better than I what Kultur had done on the high seas, they had hit sooner on the devilish logic of it. They were more or less prepared. But it struck me right in the center. After

they'd once said it I didn't any more doubt it than if I'd been sitting in an orchestra stall, with the score of the old "Flying Dutchman" and the orchestra's smash-bang, and the fervid conductor with his bald head to divert me for a couple of hours or so. And I went down into my cabin and stretched out in my berth and shut my eyes. And all I remember thinking was that if we were going to sail the seas invisible till doomsday, I'd stay put, and not get dotty seeing the noses of ships cleaving the deck or trying to hail little whistling men with scars on their faces and finding that, so far as they knew, I wasn't in the universe at all. I think I dozed for a matter of two days. The steward brought me grub of a primitive sort—our cuisine wasn't what it had been coming over—and news, whenever I would take it from him. There had been more of the ghastly collisions. We had picked up S. O. S. from an English ship and gone to her rescue, to find we could neither hail her nor, though we launched boats, approach her within twenty feet. Why? The same reason that prevented our going into New York Harbor, if you can tell me what that was. And in the midst of these futile efforts a Brazilian freighter came along and did the salving neatly, and neither ship was any more aware of us than if we had been a ship of air. But my chief news, the only news that mattered, I got from the steward's face. It was yellow-white, and the eyes were full of that same apprehension I had learned to know now—the fear of the unknown. He brought sparse items he dropped in a whisper, as if he had been forbidden to speak and yet must speak or die—about the supply of water, the supply of coal. It was his theory that, when the coal actually gave out and the engines stopped, we should stay everlastingly tossing in the welter of the sea, watching the happy wings of commerce go sailing by and hailed of none. But it proved not to be so, and when he told me that it scared him doubly. For we economized coal to the last point, and it seemed the engines went excellently without it, so long, at least, as we kept our course for Germany. Evidently, so far as we could guess at the designs of those grim

powers that had blocked our way, a German ship was to be aided, even by miracle, to sail back to Germany, but not to enter any foreign port. And we did go back to Germany, meeting meantime other German ships just out, and we hailed them and they saw us and answered. And the same fear was on the faces of every soul on board, and the news was in every case the same. They were, to all the ships of all the world, invisible.

"We slunk into harbor, and I have never known how the captain met his company or what exporters said to the consignments of merchandise returned untouched in the hold. I only know that the shore officials looked strangely at us, and, since we told the same mad story, seemed to think a whole ship's crew could hardly be incarcerated. You must remember, too, that since the war signs and wonders have had a different value. There have been too many marvels for men to scout them. There was the marvel of the victory, you know. But we won't go into that. I suppose books will be written about it until the end of time. You may be sure of one thing—I didn't let the grass grow under my feet. I made tracks for Holland, and from there I put for England, and sailed from Liverpool, and was in New York in a little over five days. And by that time the whole world knew. German ships were in full possession, as they had been before the war, of the freedom of the seas—except that they mysteriously could not use it. German ships took passengers, as of old, and loaded themselves with merchandise. But there was not a port on the surface of the globe that could receive them. Yet there was a certain beneficence in the power that condemned them to this wandering exile—they could go home. And so strange a thing is hope, and so almost unbreakable a thing is human will, that they would no sooner go home in panic than they would recover and dare the seas again, as if, peradventure, it might be different this time, or as if the wrath of the grim powers might be overpast. And it came out that the shipping rotted in their harbors, and there were many suicides among sailing-men."

When Drake reached this point in his story he almost always got solemn and rhythmic. His book was succinctly and plainly written, but he could never speak of its subject-matter without the rhythm of imagery.

"You know," he continued, "it wasn't expected, while the war was going on, that there would be a living being, not of Teutonic birth, who would ever be soft over a Teuton until near the tail end of time, when some of the penalties had been worked out. But, by George! the countries that had been injured most were the first to be sorry for the poor devils that had prated about the freedom of the seas and now had to keep their own ships tied up in harbor, tight as in war-time, because the fleet that withstood them, drew the mighty cordon, was the fleet of God. Belgium had prayers for the German fleet. England sent experts over to see what was the matter with their engines. Russia prayed for the boats, as she had for her four-footed beasts in the war, and France—well, France proposed that she and England should establish a maritime service from Germany to the United States and South American ports, with nominal freight rates, until the world found out what the deuce was the matter or what God actually meant. And it was to begin the week before Christmas, if you remember, and something put it into the clever French brain that maybe a German Christmas ship—a ship all full of toys and dolls—might be let to pass. France didn't think it was bamboozling God by swinging a censer of sentiment before Him; but it knew God might be willing to speak our little language with us, encourage us in it, let us think He knew what we were trying to tell Him when we took the toys and dolls. And, if you remember, a string of ships went out that day, all with pretty serious men on board, men of an anxious countenance. And the British and French ships convoyed them like mother birds, and other British and French ships met them, and for a time no Teuton ship dared speak a foreign one for fear it should not be answered. But finally one—it was my old ship, the *Treue Königin*, and on her my old cap-

tain—couldn't wait any longer, and did speak, and every French and English boat answered her, and she knew she and the rest were saved—for the eyes of man could see them and the ears of man were opened to their voice. And that's all. You know the rest—how the German navy slowly and soberly built up its lines and sailed the seas again, but how nobody ceased talking of the wonder of the time when it was under the ban of judgment. And nobody ever will cease, because of all the signs and marvels of these later years this was the greatest."

"I have heard," said the pacifist in the front row, "that there is one submarine that actually does sail the sea, and never has found rest."

"Yes," said Drake. He looked grim now, and nobody could doubt that he knew whereof he spoke. "She is sometimes visible. She plies back and forth along the Irish coast, and on the seventh of May she shows her periscope. She is obliged to. They say she has one passenger—the Man We Do Not Mention."

"Do you suppose—" began the pacifist, and Drake interrupted him:

"Do I suppose that sentence ever will be worked out? Maybe it isn't a sentence. Maybe it's a warning, against pride and cruelty and lust of power; maybe the Man We Do Not Mention is condemned to sail it, and sails it in fear and hate. But maybe he sails it in humility by now, and is willing to be hated, so long as he can be the warning to the world—the warning against his sins. Do you know, I've often wondered if he knows one thing—if he knows that, whenever toasts are drunk in Germany, it isn't now '*Der Tag*,' but it is, since that day when England and France joined hands to help their scared old enemy, 'The Fleet!'"

"He'd think it meant the German navy, anyway," said a younger, unregenerate man, who was no pacifist—only, being young, too quick of tongue and rash of apprehension.

"Oh no, he wouldn't," said Drake, a very warm tone in his voice. It told youth it didn't know what its elders had been through. "He'd know it meant—The Fleet!"